

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Bureau of Agricultural Economics

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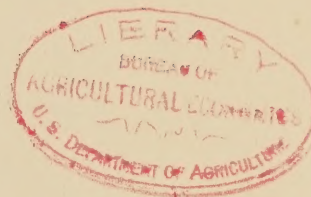
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Attitudes of Farmers
toward
Equality of AAA Benefits

Preliminary Report

(FOR ADMINISTRATIVE USE ONLY)



July 10, 1940

Division of Program Surveys

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Question: Are all farmers helped equally by the farm programs or do some groups gain more than others?

The answers made indicate that virtually all farmers answered with the AAA programs in mind.

Sample: Interviews with 619 farmers in 22 states ^{1/} between April 1 and May 18, 1940.

Summary of Results

I. General Results

1. What proportion of farmers feel that there is inequality in benefits?

Some groups gain more than others	65%
No group benefits more than others	27
Don't know	<u>8</u>
	100%
No. replies	619

Comments to the effect that "no group benefits more than others" came primarily from the dairy regions. The proportion of farmers in each of the major crop regions who made the comment follows:

Eastern Dairy	60%
Cotton	40
Great Lakes Dairy	35
Corn	15
Wheat	13

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1. N.Y., N.H., Vt., Mass., Conn., N.C., S.C., Ga., Ala., La., Tex., Ark., Ind., Ill., Iowa, Kan., Neb., S.D., N.D., Minn., Wisc.

2. Of those feeling that there is inequality of benefits, which groups are regarded as being specially favored?

	% of Farmers
Big farmer gains more than small farmer <u>1</u> /	78%
Landlord gains more than tenant or sharecropper <u>1</u> /	41
Farmers in certain crop regions gain more than those in other areas	29
Farmers who over-crop the land are favored	6
Other	10
No. of farmers believing some group favored	401

Note: Some farmers mentioned more than one group being specially favored, hence total mentions are somewhat greater than the number of farmers and therefore this table totals to more than 100%.

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1. The following comment was included in both categories: "Pro-gram results in displacement of small farmer, tenant and share-cropper--makes it harder for them to get land."

II. Types of favoritism charged
and most frequent sources of
such views

1. Programs favor big farmers

a. The following group of comments bear on this point:

	% of Mentions
General statement: helps big farmers	49
Easier for big farmer to participate:	17
He can afford to let land lie idle	
He has money to buy seed and line	
He can wait for checks--doesn't have to sell crop at once	
Program results in displacement of small farmers, tenants and croppers--makes it harder for them to get and keep land	15
Program encourages big farmer to expand size of farm--he can buy or rent more land with payments	13
Other	<u>6</u>
	100%
Total number of mentions	313

b. Favoritism in the programs tending to benefit the big farmer
is mentioned by the following proportion of all farmers inter-
viewed in the crop regions where this "favoritism" claim comes
up most frequently:

	% of farmers in regions mentioning this
Wheat	74
Corn	57
Cotton	44
Great Lakes Dairy	37

c. The source of these comments by tenure groups follows:

	% of group mentioning this
Owners	43
Tenants	62

2. Program favors landlords over tenants and croppers

a. Comments

In addition to general statements to the effect that the programs favor the landlords over the tenants or croppers, and in addition to the statement about displacement of tenants and croppers which was listed in the preceding section, 30 farmers mentioned that the landlord gets all the payments under AAA; 28 said that the programs cause increases in rentals and in tenure uncertainty for tenants; and 8 said that the landlord gets the benefit of soil building and the tenant does not.

b. Crop regions with greatest number of "favors landlord" mentions

	% of farmers in region men- tioning this
Corn	45
Cotton	32
Great Lakes Dairy	26
Wheat	13

c. Frequency of mentions by tenure levels

	% of group men- tioning this
Owners	17
Tenants	41

3. Program favors farmers in certain crop regions

a. Comments

	% of mentions
Those in intensive corn or wheat areas favored	50
Favors grain farmers at expense of those who buy grain	<u>50</u> <u>80</u> 100%
Total Mentions	116

b. Crop regions with greatest number of mentions

	% of farmers in region mentioning this
Great Lakes Dairy	33
Wheat	28
Corn	24
Eastern Dairy	6

4. Program favors farmers who over-crop land

Farmers mentioning this point claimed that the programs discriminate against those who have always followed good soil building practices in favor of those who over-crop the land to build up large bases.

5. Other comments

Eleven farmers claimed that the programs benefitted those on good land more than those on poor land. Nine claimed that the programs favor the better educated because it is too complex for the uneducated to understand and benefit from it.

III. Inequalities due to
local administration

All of the report to this point referred to inequalities attributed to the AAA program as a whole. In addition, however, 18% of all farmers interviewed mentioned discriminations due to local administration. Committeemen favoring their friends, political allies, and big farmers were mentioned most frequently among the total of 111 comments.

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